The readings were a bit dry this week, but relevant. I chose the following: "Software piracy is the same as stealing, and it can have serious consequences. yet, most students are unaware that is is wrong." by Robert Kruger in his article "Discussing Cyber Ethics with Students Is Critical". I teach copyrights and "fair use" to my students at the beginning of the year. I would say that at lease half of them do not think that downloading music from applications like Limewire is illegal. It is such a common practice that it just seems the norm to them. The Recording Industry Association of American claims that over 90% of downloaded music is illegally downloaded. It is not just the students either. Teacher are just as bad. I have had teachers ask me to copy movies for them. Educators have a great deal of freedom in using copyrighted material, but I don't feel that teachers really know what they can and can't use. This is just another example of the need to educate teacher right along with the students.

Yes this is true, becasue we are told that copying from a book is illegal, but I didn't realize using certain items from online is also illegal. You are suppose to get permission from the author before using any materials online. I remeber doing a project in my undergraduate degree, I had to write or email the author to get permission to use a certain piece and i explain what I was using it for and I was given permission to use it that one time. so yes, we must be educated on what is right just like the students.

Jack, I totally agree with you. I hear students talking about downloading music all of the time. Of course, they can't do it at school because those sites are blocked. I think our school district does a good job of blocking those sites, therefore, the students can't do any illegal downloading at school. They really shouldn't be doing it at home either, but at least the campus knows that they are using instructional computer time when they are on the computers also with the teachers' monitoring them. I think that there should be a staff development or training for teachers, parents, and administrators about the intellectual properties and what is legal or illegal with computer and literary use. It should also be included in the technology curriculum at the beginning of a technology class. This can avoid lawsuits and other legal issues from occurring.

It is hard to convince the students that this activity is wrong, when many of them go home and see their older siblings and parents doing the same thing. Our local flea markets have vendors set up selling pirated copies of movies and music. They are shut down by law enforcement and right back within a few weeks in a new location. With all the torrent sites out there, it doesn't take much to be able to do this. How do we educate the parents?

I agree with Sharon. It is really hard to convince students that illegal downloading is the wrong thing to do. I have had this discussion with students many times. The last time it came up in class about 2 months ago, the entire class looked at me like I was from Mars when I told them it was illegal to copy their friend's CD for their own use and not pay for it. It is a difficult distinction for them. They see it as helping out a friend, not necessarily stealing. I agree we need to work on educating our parents as well. Maybe it needs to be a school-wide initiative to avoid using copyrighted materials without first getting permission. If we are constantly setting the example AND making sure our students see us doing it, maybe it will get the idea across.

Yes, it is prevalent practice, but isn't the U-Tube, Fair(y) Tale we viewed as part of our assignments this week wonderful? I intend to share it with my students. Hopefully it will help clear up some issues in a very entertaining way. I mentioned last week that I keep a jar for payment of downloading music. My students think it's silly since you can download for free and constantly badger me to let them. Maybe they need to be taught this at a much younger age?

Barbara, Yes, the YouTube video was great. I also plan on sharing it with my students. I think your payment jar idea is a really good one. They are constantly asking to download things. Having a pay as you go policy could certainly help drive home the point that we take the laws seriously.

I plan on showing the YouTube video too. I love the payment jar. That is a perfect way to model the correct way. I am trying to figure out a way I could do it at my school when I-Tunes is blocked.

Sharon, I agree with you about parents needing to be educated on the illegal downloading of music, cd's and other items. I think that the music sites should block or forbid downloading and cd's should be copyrighted. I know that it may not be possible, but something must be done to stop the illegal downloading. I think that schools should have a informative virtual parent meeting or a meeting at school to make them aware of the consequences of downloading illegal music or cd's. There can also be a letter or informative article sent home. I don't know how effective any of these suggestions would be, but the parents should be informed for both themselves and their children.

In summary  
How do we stop piracy and plagiarism? There are a lot of people with more invested than I who are trying desperately to stop piracy and plagiarism. In my opinion the fear of getting caught could be the best deterant. Right now there is little fear. Our job is to educate to the best of our ability and then if the law enforcement agencies can make enough examples, only then will we see a reduction in this type of activity. We are seeing industries change because of this, and possibly change forever. All we can do is our part...educate.

I have to agree Jack. I use a lot of online resources in my class that includes iTunes purchases, YouTube and websites that provide stream videos. There isn't a day that goes by that student tells me about a recent illegal download they acquired. Many of my students have "jail breaked" their iTouches or iPhones which allows them to illegally download unlimited apps, videos and music. I usually make that an opportunity to educate them on how doing such an act sets them up for prosecution. They seem oblivious to the idea that they can be potentially tracked and traced and almost dare the corporate service providers to come get them. It's simply a situation that is prove that they feel they are above what is right and the only way to control is to take away the source!